

# Safety & Health Update

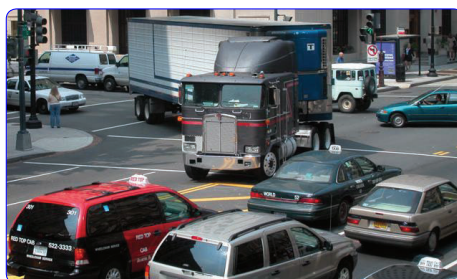
January 2013

## Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation

This monthly e-newsletter provides updates on the Workplace Safety Programs of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI-DWC). Both subscribers and non-subscribers of workers' compensation insurance are eligible for these services.

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## Transportation Safety Tips

### READ THE ROAD!

Take this brief quiz and check your Safe Driving I.Q. You probably already know all the correct answers, but the quiz will act as a refresher for your memory.

1. *True or False? Yellow lines on the road separate traffic traveling in the same direction.*

**Answer:** False. Yellow lines on the highway, whether solid or dashed, generally separate traffic going in opposite directions. ([continued on page 2](#))

## A Safe Lifting How-To

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), there were 19,180 injuries resulting in days away from work that involved overexertion and bodily reaction in Texas in 2011. Over a third of these cases involved overexertion in lifting or lowering. Assessing

an object before you try to lift it, using proper lifting techniques, and planning your route can help prevent these types of injuries. ([continued on page 3](#))



# Transportation Safety Tips

Download!

2. *Do you know what a yellow EXIT ONLY panel below a green freeway guide sign means?*

**Answer:** A yellow **EXIT ONLY** panel below a green freeway sign means that the lane under the panel becomes the exit ramp. If you remain in the lane, you must exit the freeway.



3. *Are you permitted to cross a double solid yellow line?*

**Answer:** The only time that you are permitted to cross a double solid yellow line is when you are making a left turn into a driveway or business entrance.

4. *What does a pentagon-shaped sign mean?*

**Answer:** The pentagon-shaped sign with the point to the top warns us to watch for school children. The new optional color for these signs – fluorescent yellow-green – is much easier to see in low light and foggy/rainy weather.

5. *What are the orange diamond signs used for?*

**Answer:** Orange diamond signs are construction signs that are specifically used to warn drivers about construction and work zone activity. Remember that in a work zone, a flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign, meaning you can be cited for disobeying his or her directions. Don't forget to slow down and give road crews a break.

6. *In a "weaving section" where traffic is entering and exiting a freeway interchange, who is required to yield the right of way?*

**Answer:** One of the most hazardous lane-management situations occurs when freeway traffic is exiting and entering in the same area. During this "weaving" situation, vehicles entering the freeway have to yield the right of way to thru traffic and exiting traffic.

Remember to practice safety. Don't learn it by accident. ▲

## TDI Resources

The TDI-DWC offers the following free driving safety publication:

- *Driving and Being Road-Wise FactSheet.*

This publication, available in both English and Spanish, can be downloaded from the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/index.html>, along with 15 other driving safety publications.

The TDI-DWC features a free occupational safety and health DVD loan library. Call 512-804-4620 for more information or visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>. DVDs on many driving dangers can be found under the following headings:

- *Driving Safety;*
- *Road Construction Safety;*
- *Transportation Safety* (includes safe operation of buses and vans); and
- *Trucking Safety* (covers professional trucking, both in straight trucks and tractor trailers).

## Other Resources

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) offers two index pages of information related to signs and signals on the agency website at <http://www.txdot.gov/driver/share-road.html> and <http://www.txdot.gov/driver/laws.html>.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) offers a number of safe driving topics on the agency website at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety>. These topics include Aggressive Driving, Bicycles, Distracted Driving, Impaired Driving, Motorcycles, Pedestrians, School Buses and other topics.

## Safety Tips

### A SAFE LIFTING HOW-TO

- Try sliding the object along the floor with your foot. If it moves easily you should be able to pick it up. If it seems too heavy, ask a fellow employee to help you.
- When lifting, step up to the object. Place your feet at the same width as your shoulders, one forward and one back. This allows you to get the object close to your body for easier lifting effort.
- Drop down to the object by bending at your hips, waist, knees and ankles. Keep your shoulders back and your head up. Grab the object at two points that will provide you the best grip.
- Keep the correct back position and hold the object close when lifting the object.



- If you need to carry an object to another place, it is a good idea to walk the route in advance to look for tripping or falling hazards such as extension cords or wet spots. If you must carry it a long way, look for possible rest stops that will provide a place to set the object at waist height.
- When you reach your destination, perform the lift in reverse, maintaining the same posture until the object is in its new position. ▲

## Download!

### TDI Resources

The TDI-DWC offers the following back injury prevention and safe lifting publications for free:

- *Back Injury Prevention* – English/Spanish
- *Back Injury Prevention Safety Training Program*
- *Back Injury Prevention* (for Health Care Industry) Safety Training Program
- *Lifting Safety* – Take 5 for Safety

These publications, along with many other safety publications, are available in both English and Spanish, and can be downloaded from the agency website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/index.html>.

The TDI-DWC features a free occupational safety and health DVD loan library. Call 512-804-4620 for more information or visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>. DVDs on back injury prevention topics can be found under the following headings:

- *Back Injury Prevention*
- *Ergonomics*

### Other Resources

The Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA) provides a set of Ergonomics eTools to provide stand-alone, interactive, web-based information to address ergonomics hazards. The index page is located on the agency website at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/ergonomics/outreach.html#etools>. This index page includes links to eTools for industries such as electrical contractors, baggage handling, beverage delivery, computer workstations, grocery warehousing, healthcare, poultry processing, printing, and sewing.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) provides a free publication on Safe Lifting and Movement of Nursing Home Residents on the agency website at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2006-117/>.



Regional Safety Summits

Free OSHA 10-Hour Construction Classes

Custom On-Site Training

Nominations Being Accepted for the TDI-DWC Peer Review Safety Program

Return-to-Work Reimbursement Program for Employers

## Regional Safety Summits

### Upcoming Regional Safety Summits

**Waco — February 13, 2013**

**Region XII  
2101 West Loop 340**

**San Antonio — March 20, 2013**

**Region 20 Education Service Center  
1314 Hines Avenue**

**Fort Worth — April 17, 2013**

**Norris Conference Center-Fort Worth/  
Sundance Square  
304 Houston Street**

**Houston — June 12, 2013**

**Norris Conference Center-Houston/  
Westchase**

**9990 Richmond Avenue, South  
Building, Suite 102**

**T**he Regional Safety Summits that the TDI-DWC hosts in multiple regions of the state are designed to be affordable safety training to help prevent the leading causes of injuries and fatalities in Texas workplaces. Out of the four topic sessions presented, employers and employees will be able to choose to attend the most valuable to their industry and workplace. These seminars will be held from 8:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m and the cost is \$99 per person and includes coffee and snacks.

2013 course descriptions and agenda to be announced.▲

### Register!

For summit session descriptions, when available, and to register, visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html> under "Safety and Health Training Seminars" or call 512-804-4610. Registration fee is \$99 per person (register five people and get registration for a sixth person free).



## Free OSHA 10-Hour Construction Classes

**T**he TDI-DWC offers free OSHA 10-Hour Construction classes in both English and Spanish in Austin, Dallas/Fort Worth, El Paso, and Houston. Each two-day course is presented by authorized instructors and is designed to train employers and their employees in the essentials of occupational health and safety in construction. Classes cover specific OSHA standards and requirements as they apply to the construction industry and teach safety awareness, which helps in recognizing and reducing the risks of job site hazards. Participants who successfully complete the two-day course will receive an OSHA 10-Hour Construction class completion card within four to six weeks. ▲

### Register!

For additional information on these classes, visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/events/index.html>.

Due to limited space, registration is required. To register or for more information on class availability, call 512-804-4610.

## Custom On-Site Training

**T**he TDI-DWC offers affordable safety training courses that can be delivered onsite to businesses, groups, and trade associations, with priority given to those industries or occupations that experience high incidences of injuries, illnesses and fatalities in Texas. The TDI-DWC Training Program Descriptions guide located on the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/pubs/videoresource/ghsphstrainingp.pdf> provides information on course content and length. The cost for onsite training varies according to the travel costs to the training location. Many courses can be presented at no cost to any business/industry via teleconference or webinar. ▲

### Book Your Training Class!

To request training, or for more information, call 512-804-4610 or e-mail [safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov).

## **Nominations Being Accepted for the TDI-DWC Peer Review Safety Program**

**T**he TDI-DWC Peer Review Safety Program recognizes Texas employers with exemplary safety programs, which can serve as models for other employers. The TDI-DWC is accepting nominations for this award, to be presented at its annual safety conference, the Texas Safety Summit in May 2013.

Employers who are members of the Peer Review Safety Program may be asked to provide help with safety programs and issues to peer organizations in the same North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) code. Such assistance may include giving presentations to appropriate industry associations, mentoring other organizations, serving as a panel member for safety and health issues, or participating in the Texas Safety Summit.

### **Who is eligible to apply for Peer Review Safety Program recognition?**

- Any Texas employer with workers' compensation coverage; or
- Employers without workers' compensation coverage that have five or more employees

### **Who can nominate an employer for Peer Review Safety Program recognition?**

- An eligible organization for itself;
- A workers' compensation insurance carrier;
- Industrial trade organizations, labor organizations or similar entities; or
- Staff members of the TDI-DWC. ▲

### **Apply for the Peer Review Safety Program Award**

For additional information and to download the Peer Review Safety Program application, visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/peereviewsfty.html> or call 512-804-4631.

## Return-to-Work Reimbursement Program for Employers

### REIMBURSEMENTS AVAILABLE FOR RETURN TO WORK

**E**mployers in Texas may be reimbursed by the TDI-DWC for up to \$5,000 for the costs of workplace modifications, equipment, tools, furniture or devices, or other related costs that they pay to bring an injured employee back to work in a modified duty or alternate duty capacity.

### ARE YOU AN ELIGIBLE EMPLOYER?

- Are you a small employer that employed at least 2 but not more than 50 employees each business day of the previous calendar year?
- Do you purchase workers' compensation insurance in Texas?
- Do you have an employee who has a work-related injury that was accepted as compensable by your workers' compensation insurance carrier?

- Did you pay for any workplace modifications, purchase any special equipment, tools, furniture or devices, or pay any other related costs to bring your injured employee back to work in a modified or alternate duty capacity?

If yes, you may be eligible to receive a reimbursement, a preauthorization or even an advance from the Return-to-Work Reimbursement Program for Employers.

There is no guarantee that if you have paid for workplace modifications that you will receive reimbursement.

Agencies of the State of Texas and political subdivisions of the State are not eligible to participate in the program. ▲

### Apply for Reimbursement!

Call 512-804-5000 or e-mail [rtw.services@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:rtw.services@tdi.texas.gov) for more information or to obtain an application form.

## Upcoming Safety Observances

**January 1-31**

**National Radon Action Month**

**February 1-28**

**American Heart Disease Awareness Month**

**February 3-9**

**National Burn Awareness Week**

**March 1-31**

**Workplace Eye Wellness Month**

**March 17-23**

**National Poison Prevention Week**

**April 1-30**

**Alcohol Awareness Month**

**April 1-30**

**National Distracted Driving Awareness Month**

**April 1-7**

**National Public Health Week**

**April 15-19**

**National Work Zone Awareness Month**

**April 28**

**Workers' Memorial Day**



TDI, OSHA Recognizes Texas Employers with Exemplary Safety Programs

Featuring New titles & Tool Safety DVDs Safety DVDs

OSHA Update

Safety Violation Hotline

## TDI, OSHA Recognizes Texas Employers with Exemplary Safety Programs

**T**he TDI-DWC's OSHCON Program and OSHA recently recognized two Texas companies for their outstanding safety programs.

The Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) award recognizes small, private sector Texas employers for exemplary safety management programs and low incidence rates of work-related injuries and illnesses after participation in the TDI-DWC OSHCON program.

The SHARP award was presented to the following Texas companies.

- Anthony Forest Products Company wood chip mill, located in Troup, debarks trees and creates wood chips sized to customer request. This company has been granted a two-year exemption from OSHA for planned inspections.
- Houston Foam Plastics, location #2 in Houston, provides packaging solutions for a broad range of industries in the Gulf Coast region. This company has been granted a one-year exemption from OSHA for planned inspections.

OSHCON is a free service designed to help employers understand and comply with OSHA standards through safety inspections conducted by TDI-DWC's professional consultants. Benefits for employers participating in the OSHCON program include prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses; confirmation to their employees and customers of their commitment

to safety; public acknowledgement of their safety efforts; monetary savings to the company by reducing workers' compensation costs and other costs associated with work-related injuries and illnesses; and protection of company assets such as employees, equipment, supplies, products and facilities.

Employers receiving consultation services from the OSHCON program may be eligible for SHARP status if they have fewer than 250 employees at a worksite and fewer than 500 employees corporate-wide; have operations limited to a fixed worksite; undergo a full-service OSHCON consultation; involve employees in the consultation process; correct all hazards identified by the consultation; and have days away restricted time (DART) and total case rate (TCR) injury and illness incidence rates below the national average for their industries. ▲

### Find Out More About SHARP and OSHCON!

For further information about the OSHCON program and SHARP, call 1-800-687-7080, visit the OSHCON website at <http://www.txoshcon.com>, or e-mail [OSHCON@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:OSHCON@tdi.state.tx.us).



## Featuring New Titles & Tool Safety DVDs

**T**he TDI-DWC Resource Center has over 4,000 DVDs in its library. Most titles are available in both English and Spanish.

### DVDs for Tool Safety

#### **High-Impact Power Tool Safety**

DVD1707

"Features six common accident re-enactments. Covers both electric and pneumatic tools. Reviews being trained and authorized to use tools. Demonstrates correct body placement and tool positioning." 19 min.

#### **Powered Hand Tool Safety: Handle With Care**

DVD1150ES

"Shows the safe usage of powered hand tools in a variety of industrial settings. Explains the basic principles of safety for using powered hand tools. Discusses cords and hoses, saws, drills, pneumatic tools and powder actuated tools." 19 min.

#### **Working Safely with Hand and Power Tools**

DVD1421, DVD1421S

"Covers safe use of wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers and striking tools; using drills and power saws safely; guarding and grounding of power tools; and unique hazards of battery-operated tools." 17 min.

More DVDs on the safe use of hand and power tools can be found under the Tools - Safety subject heading in the Resource Center catalog.

### **New Titles Available in the TDI Resource Center**

#### **Forklifts: Inspect, Recharge, Refuel**

DVD2890

"Outlines the hazards associated with refueling gas, diesel or LPG engines, and shows how to charge and change a battery. Also covers inspections with and without the engine running." 15 min.

#### **Golf Cart and LSV Safety: On and Off the Course**

DVD2889ES

"Covers basic golf cart and low-speed vehicle (LSV) operating safety rules and vehicle inspection. Covers safe driving on hills and slopes, braking, stopping, and parking. Discusses the differences between golf carts/LSVs and automobiles." 17 min.

#### **HazCom: In Sync with GHS**

DVD2883

"Helps employees understand the new standardized procedure (Globally Harmonized Standard) for communicating chemical hazards. Discusses labels on shipping containers, workplace labeling, safety data sheets, the written hazard communication plan, and the responsibility of the employer." 16 min.▲

### **Book Your DVDs!**

Information on how any Texas employer or employee can check out safety DVDs for free is available on the TDI Resource Center webpage at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>.

## OSHA Update

### New OSHA Webpage Provides Information on Preventing Backover Incidents in Construction

According to the BLS, over 70 employees died from backover incidents in 2011. A backover incident occurs when a backing vehicle strikes an employee who is standing, walking, or kneeling behind the vehicle. These incidents can be prevented.

OSHA has published a new Preventing Backovers webpage that provides information about the hazards of backovers; solutions that can reduce the risk or frequency of these incidents; articles and resources; and references to existing regulations and letters of interpretation. ▲

#### Download!

This information can be found on the OSHA website at <http://www.osha.gov/doc/topics/backover/index.html>.

### Free OSHA Compliance Assistance

The TDI-DWC provides a free compliance assistance service for small businesses with fewer than 250 employees at any one facility, and no more than 500 employees nationwide through its Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (OSHCON) Program. OSHCON is a non-regulatory program, and its professional safety and health consultants are available to help you identify and eliminate occupational hazards in your workplace, whether or not your company carries workers' compensation insurance. ▲

#### Find Out More About OSHCON!

For information about the OSHCON program and assistance with OSHA standards, contact the TDI-DWC by calling 1-800-687-7080 or visit the OSHCON website at <http://www.txoshcon.com>.

## Safety Violations Hotline

By law, your employer is responsible for providing a safe work environment for you. The Safety Violations Hotline is a bilingual, 24-hour, toll-free telephone line that allows Texas employees to report unsafe working conditions to the TDI-DWC. You can report hazards without fear of retribution from your employer. The Hotline allows you, the employee, to take an active role in preventing workplace injuries, illnesses and fatalities. After a report is received, TDI-DWC safety inspectors will work with the employer and insurance carrier to help eliminate workplace safety and health hazards. ▲

#### Report a Safety Violation

Report workplace hazards to the Safety Violations Hotline by calling 1-800-452-9595 or using the online form <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/hotline.html>

## CONTACT US!

### FREE OSHA COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE

- Occupational Safety and Health Consultation (OSHCON) Program  
<http://www.txoshcon.com>  
**1-800-687-7080**  
[OSHCON@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:OSHCON@tdi.texas.gov)

### SAFETY & HEALTH RESOURCES

- Free Safety and Health Publications  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/index.html>
- Free Audiovisual Loans  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/avcatalog.html>  
**512-804-4620**
- Safety Training Courses and Seminars  
**512-804-4610**  
[safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:safetytraining@tdi.texas.gov)
- Helpful Safety and Health Resource Links  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/govunivlinks.html>

### TDI-DWC Resource Center

**512-804-4620**  
[ResourceCenter@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:ResourceCenter@tdi.texas.gov)

### OCCUPATIONAL INJURY AND ILLNESS DATA

- Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII)  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/sis/nonfatalhomepag.html>  
**512-804-4664**  
[InjuryAnalysis@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:InjuryAnalysis@tdi.texas.gov)
- Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI)  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/sis/fathomepage.html>  
**512-804-4658**  
[CFOI@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:CFOI@tdi.texas.gov)

### REPORT A SAFETY VIOLATION OR HAZARD

Reports are taken in both English and Spanish and may be made anonymously.

- Safety Violations Hotline  
**1-800-452-9595**  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/hotline.html>

### RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

**512-804-5000**  
<http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/rtw/index.html>

- Please forward this e-mail to friends and colleagues interested in preventing workplace injuries and illnesses.
- **Have a safe day!**